DAVID • De LANDRO • DAVIDSON • YEUNG • COX

X-FACTOR

RATED T+

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In a society where mutants and former mutants alike feel threatened by the world around them, they turn to their first, best line of defense whenever trouble arises: X-Factor, the private detective agency founded by Madrox, the Multiple Man.

X-FACTOR

FOR THOSE WHO CAME IN LATE: Deep in the Bengalla Jungle, there is the legend of the Ghost Who Walks...wait. Sorry. Wrong recap.

FOR THOSE WHO CAME IN LATER: Jamie Madrox has been catapulted into the future eighty years hence, where he has been pulled into the Summers Rebellion overseen by a cyborg Scott Summers, his daughter Ruby, and an assortment of mutants including a time-displaced and five-years-older Layla Miller, the mysterious young woman who "knows stuff." There they've been fighting a seemingly winning battle against the Sentinels who are, in turn, overseen by former presidential science adviser Anthony Falcone. But a dimension hopping being named Cortex has gone back in time and is systematically erasing the mutant rebels from time and space by killing their ancestors, including one who was being guarded by X-Factor. To counter this, Madrox enlisted the aid of an incredibly aged and semi-senile Doctor Doom, whose "Doomlock" technology enabled Cortex to make changes that would impact on the future rather than create alternative timelines. Von Doom, using his mastery of time travel, was able to summon Cortex back to his point of origin...but then double crossed his hosts by ordering Cortex to kill all the mutants, beginning with Madrox, Ruby, and a not-yet-evil Trevor Fitzroy.

FOR THOSE WHO CAME IN EVEN LATER: Peter's daughter Ariel kicked off her college career with a school trip to Ireland, where she promptly broke her foot, and his daughter Caroline kicked off her first grade career by burning her wrist in the cafeteria reaching for some hash browns. Thank heavens for health insurance.

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"Once upon a time--forty years from now...there was a boy who lived in an orphanage, just as you do now.
"His parents were killed, and his home destroyed (he was off visiting his grandma that night) under 'mysterious circumstances.' That's what authorities always called it...
"...when they thought mutants were involved.
"The boy's name was Anthony Falcone, and he hated mutants.
"Hated them more than anybody ever had, maybe."
THEY SAID THERE WERE NO MORE MUTANTS. THEY LIED.
YES. YES, THEY DID.
AHHHH!!!!
OH DEAR. TERRIFIED, ARE YOU?
MY, MY. THE THINGS WE DO TO CHILDREN.

WE LIE TO THEM. WE PAINT A VISION OF THE WORLD THAT ISN'T ACCURATE.
AND WE TAKE THEIR PARENTS FROM THEM.
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, ISN'T IT, ANTHONY FALCONE?
"His name was Mr. Tryp. He was a man who lived in between times...
"...stuck there like a piece of cork floating in a bottle.
"And he asked Anthony..."
WOULD YOU LIKE TO MAKE ALL THE MUTANTS GO AWAY?
YES. VERY MUCH.
IT WILL TAKE SOME TIME, ANTHONY. ABOUT FOUR DECADES.
BUT IF YOU LISTEN TO ME, AND DO EXACTLY AS I SAY...
...I CAN ARRANGE FOR THAT.

FORTY YEARS LATER...
IT'S HAPPENING NOW, FALCONE.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, TRYP? WHAT'S--?
WHAT THE HELL...?
CORTEX? CORTEX IS BACK IN OUR TIME?
SO IT WOULD SEEM.
AND RIGHT IN THE MIDST OF THE SUMMERS CAMP.
IN THE...?
WE HAVE THEM. WE FINALLY HAVE THEM.
ALL SQUADRONS! CONVERGE ON MY SIGNAL.
IMPLEMENT OPERATION CLEAN SWEEP! REPEAT--!
CLEAN SWEEP!
FINALLY... FINALLY...
IT'S GOING TO BE A BRAND NEW DAY.

THIS ISN'T MY IDEA, MADROX!
IT'S VON DOOM'S!
THERE'S NOTHING ELEGANT ABOUT THIS. NOTHING CLEVER.
IT'S NOT THE SLIGHTEST BIT NOIR.
UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS WHAT IT IS. AND ULTIMATELY...
YOU BROUGHT THIS ON YOURSELF.
FRIEND OF YOURS?
I--
SHUT UP! THIS IS...
OH MY GOD! FITZ!
IN MY DEFENSE, HE WAS DIRECTLY IN THE PATH OF WHERE I WAS AIMING.
I CAN'T BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS LOUSY REFLEXES--
OOOOFFF!
I'LL KILL YOU, YOU SON OF A--

BLAKOWWWW
WOOOO!
THAT GIRL'S GOT SOME SUGAR IN HER SMACKS!
I MUST HAVE A PIECE OF THAT.
LEAVE THEM ALONE.
I'LL BE DAMNED.
JOIN THE CLUB.

GO GET LAYLA.
I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND--
IT'S NOT FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND. IT'S FOR YOU TO DO.
NOW!
AND YOU! VON DOOM!
"KILL ALL THE MUTANTS?" YOU.... TRAITOROUS--!
A TRAITOR MUST HAVE A CAUSE TO BETRAY. MY LOYALTY IS TO MYSELF. THUS, I BETRAY NO ONE.
YOU DON'T TALK YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS!
UNFFFF!
TALK IS CHEAP, MY DEAR.

THE PRICE FOR TALK, HOWEVER...
...PARTICULARLY WHEN IT IS WHOLLY INAPPROPRIATE TALK AIMED AT YOUR BETTERS...
...CAN BE VERY, VERY STEEP.
ESPECIALLY WHEN ONE SUCH AS I ENCOUNTERS A CREATURE SUCH AS MR. CLOPS HERE...
...MORE CYBERNETIC ORGANISM THAN MAN.
I HAVE ALWAYS HAD A KNACK FOR CONTROLLING SUCH ORGANISMS.
MR. CLOPS: KINDLY DISPOSE OF YOUR OFFSPRING.

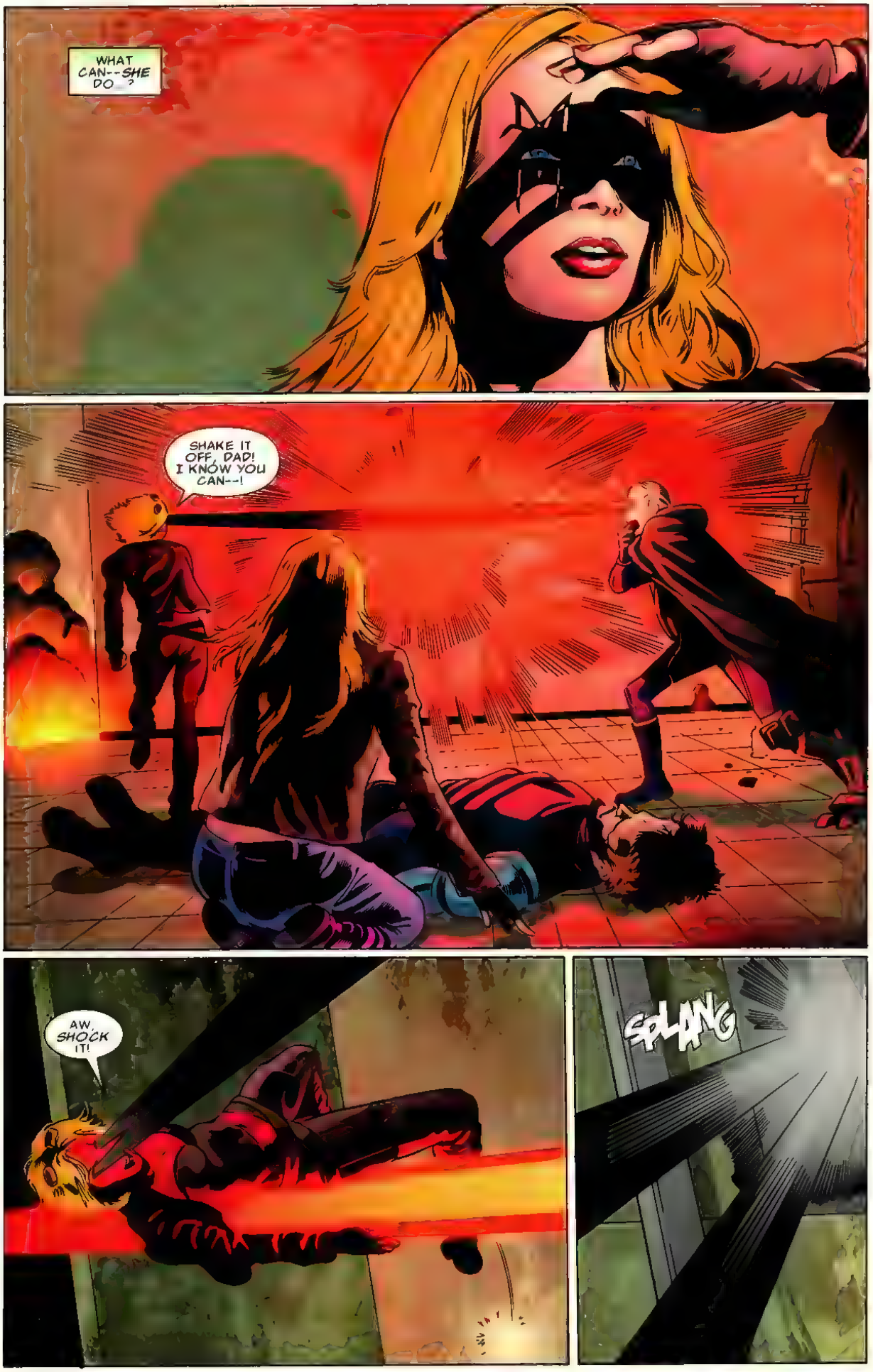
STAY BACK.
I SAID STAY BACK! I'LL HANDLE THIS!
OH, IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO?
AND HOW, LAYLA, ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO THAT?
PLANNING TO POSITION ME SO THAT SOMETHING DROPS ON ME?
IS A WHALE GOING TO LEAP UP AND SWALLOW ME?
MAYBE I GET STRUCK BY LIGHTNING? WITH YOU, EVERYTHING'S POSSIBLE.
YOU'D THINK THAT... BUT NO.
HARDLY ANYTHING IS.
THAT'S THE HELL OF BEING ME. KNOWING THAT FREE WILL...
...IT'S A JOKE.
AND I'M THE PUNCH LINE.
I BELIEVE THAT'S MY CUE.
NO

IT'S MINE.
LAYLA. GO. RUBY WANTS YOU INSIDE.
THIS GUY'S MINE...IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD.
SO YOU'RE THE OTHER DUPE THAT FORGE SENT INTO THE FUTURE.
YES. IN THE SAME SENSE THAT YOU WERE ONCE A ZYGOTE.
WHAT I WAS ISN'T MUCH RELATED TO WHAT I AM.
I AM UNIQUE--
YOU KNOW BETTER.
YOU ARE, AT THE VERY LEAST, THE TENTH DUPE TO GO ROGUE ON ME.
IRONIC CONSIDERING LAYLA THINKS SO LITTLE OF FREE WILL
POINT IS: THEY'RE ALL GONE AND I'M STILL HERE.
SO WHAT'S YOUR PLAN, THEN? TRY TO REABSORB ME?
FIRST OF ALL: YOU CAN'T. I'VE EVOLVED TOO FAR.
SECOND, EVEN IF YOU COULD, YOU WOULDN'T DARE.
I'D BE MORE LIKELY TO TAKE YOU OVER.
COME ON, MADROX. YOU FANCY YOURSELF THE HARD-BOILED DETECTIVE.
WHAT WOULD SAM SPADE DO? OR PHILIP MARLOWE? HELL, WHAT WOULD JAKE GITTES DO?
UNNHH!

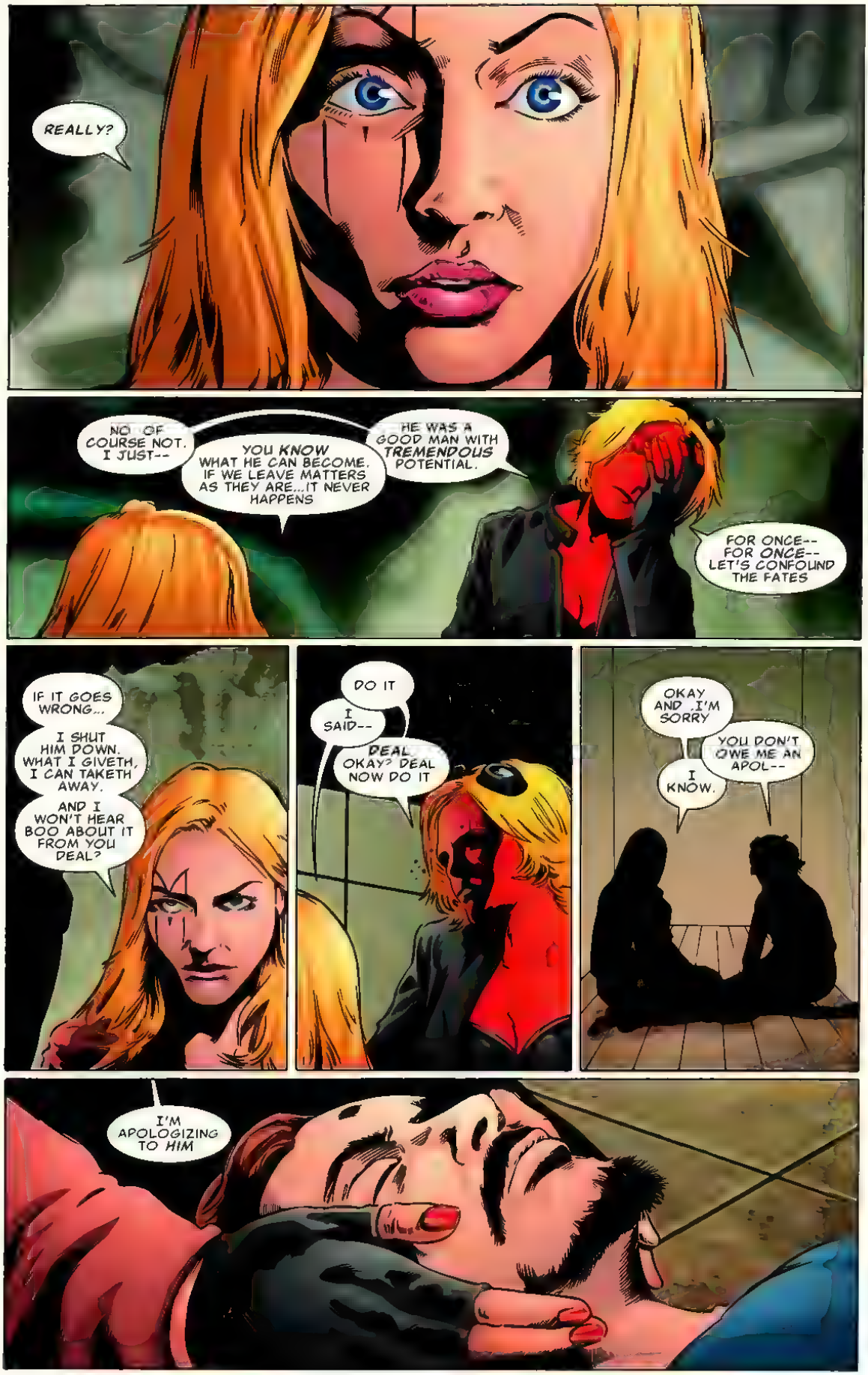
SERIOUSLY? YOU'RE LOOKING TO THROW DOWN WITH ME?
YOU WANTED HARD-BOILED.
BEING HARD-BOILED DOESN'T RULE OUT BEING CRACKED.
COME ON! LET'S GO
I CAN KILL YOU HALF A DOZEN WAYS...NOT THAT I NEED MORE THAN ONE.
A PUNCH-OUT IS JUST GOING TO PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS. EACH IMPACT WILL GENERATE MORE DUPES...
IT'S NOT AUTOMATIC. I CAN STOP MYSELF FROM REPLICATING.
COME ON, SONNY BOY. SHOW THE OLD MAN WHAT YOU'VE GOT.
OKAY. FINE.
FOR STARTERS...

I'VE GOT THIS.
ARRRRHHH!
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
WHAT ELSE DO I NEED, REALLY?

OKAY, NOW... SERIOUSLY...WHERE'S JAMIE PRIME?
I MEAN, MADROX COULDN'T BE--WOULDN'T BE--THAT STUPID AS TO SEND THE GENUINE ARTICLE AGAINST ME.
I WISH.
You're way too clever for me...
I'll just lie here bleeding grateful that the real Madrox...
...is summering in the Hamptons
OH. OF COURSE.
HECAT'E
IN AN ALTERNATE REALITY RIGHT NOW, YOU NEVER EXISTED BECAUSE IN THAT REALITY, LONGSHOT FAILED TO STOP AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT.
UNFORTUNATELY, IN THIS ONE--THE ONE I'M TRYING TO CHANGE--YOU'RE STILL ALIVE AND KICKING.
I'LL JUST HAVE TO SETTLE THAT DIRECTLY.
SEEMS A WASTE OF RESOURCES, BUT--WHAT CAN YOU DO?
GOTTA GET YOU TO SALVE, BEFORE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN HELP YOU IS BUTTERFLY.
LAYLA? WHAT... WHAT IS LINQUON... TALKING ABOUT?


WHAT CAN--SHE DO--?
SHAKE IT OFF, DAD! I KNOW YOU CAN--!
AW, SHOCK IT!
SPLANG

UNNFFFF!
VON DOOM! I'LL KILL YOU FOR THIS, YOU--!
DAMMIT! GONE! HOW THE HELL--?
NICE TRICK WITH THE RICOCHET.
THANKS. DAD TAUGHT IT TO ME LAYLA
NO
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING YET.
KEEP AT IT
LAYLA... YOU CAN DO IT I'VE SEEN IT. WE ALL HAVE.
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'VE SEEN.
BUTTERFLIES... BIRDS... FISH.. A BEACHED SEAL THAT ONE TI--
HE'S NOT AN INSECT OR A SEAL, OKAY? YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE ASKING!
WE CAN SAVE HIM!
WHY DO YOU CARE SO MUCH, RUBY? WHAT'S THE--?
HE'S MY SON


REALLY?
NO. OF COURSE NOT. I JUST--
YOU KNOW WHAT HE CAN BECOME. IF WE LEAVE MATTERS AS THEY ARE...IT NEVER HAPPENS
HE WAS A GOOD MAN WITH TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL.
FOR ONCE-- FOR ONCE-- LET'S CONFOUND THE FATES
IF IT GOES WRONG...
I SHUT HIM DOWN. WHAT I GIVETH, I CAN TAKETH AWAY.
AND I WON'T HEAR BOO ABOUT IT FROM YOU DEAL?
DO IT
I SAID--
DEAL OKAY? DEAL NOW DO IT
OKAY AND .I'M SORRY
YOU DON'T OWE ME AN APOL--
I KNOW.
I'M APOLOGIZING TO HIM

ARRHHH... SON OF A--
I'M SORRY IT IS HURTING
IT WILL ONLY HURT FOR ANOTHER FEW MOMENTS...
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.
AARRGHHH!!!
I COULD HAVE DONE THAT TO YOU...TO ANY OF YOU...AT ANY TIME.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE SCOPE OF MY POWER? DO YOU--?
SHUT UP!!

IF YOU'RE GONNA DO IT, THEN DO IT!
YOU COULD HAVE SHOT ME IN THE HEAD! TAKEN ME OUT!
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? WHY ARE YOU SCREWING AROUND?
BECAUSE IF
WOULDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE WHAT'S COMING.
AND I WANTED YOU TO BE AROUND FOR IT.
I WANTED YOU TO HAVE A TASTE OF WHAT I WENT THROUGH.
I TRIED TO RETURN TO YOU. GOT TRAPPED IN A VORTEX...
A HUNDRED LIFETIMES PASSED FOR EVERY MINUTE I WAS THERE...
AND HOW MUCH THOUGHT DID YOU GIVE ME, "DAD," WHILE I WAS GONE? HOW MUCH?
NONE AT ALL. HAPPY?
WHAT THE HELL--?

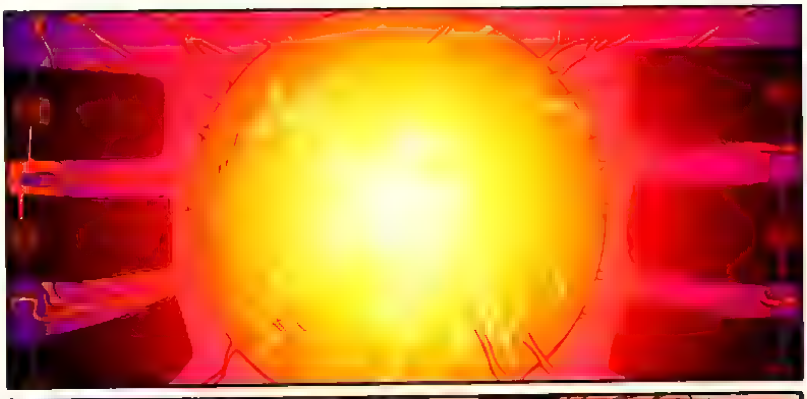
MY GOD. SENTINELS AND...THEY'RE MASSIVE MASSIVE!
--MASSIVE MISTAKE, FALCONE. YOU DON'T NEED TO BE ON-SITE LIKE THIS...
YES, TRYP. YES. I DO
IT'S AN UNNECESSARY RISK--
MUTANTS HAVE TAKEN EVERYTHING FROM ME, TRYP. MY FAMILY...MY CAREER .. EVERYTHING
WHAT'S THE WORST THAT CAN HAPPEN? I DIE?
I'LL RISK IT.
AH. AND HERE COME MORE OF THEM FROM THE WOODWORKS

DOESN'T MATTER. THEY WERE ALL GOING TO WIND UP COMING TO ME ANYWAY.
ALL COMPONENTS. ACTIVATE CLEAN SWEEP
GOD'S WILL BE DONE
OH
...YOU HAVE GOT...
...TO BE KIDDING ME.

GREAT. WE GO FROM HARD-BOILED DETECTIVE NOIR
TO VOLTRON.
BUT WHAT THE HELL--?
--IS IT DOING? THAT'S WHAT YOU WERE WONDERING, ISN'T IT?
YOU KNOW ALL THOSE SENTINELS YOUR REBELLION HAS BEEN BEATING SO "EASILY" THE PAST MONTHS?
TROJAN HORSE, MY FRIEND.

"And Cortex explained then--because that's what bad guys do, they just have to explain these things...

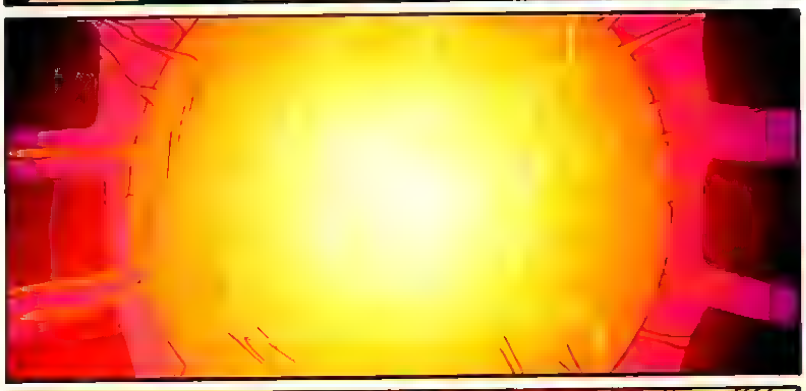
"All those Sentinels who had been destroyed had power cores loaded with specially-charged Hadron particles.



"Like subatomic snowflakes, the Hadron particles clung to any mutants nearby. They'd been getting them in low doses from Sentinels while in the camps; the loss of the camps forced Falcone to saturate them.

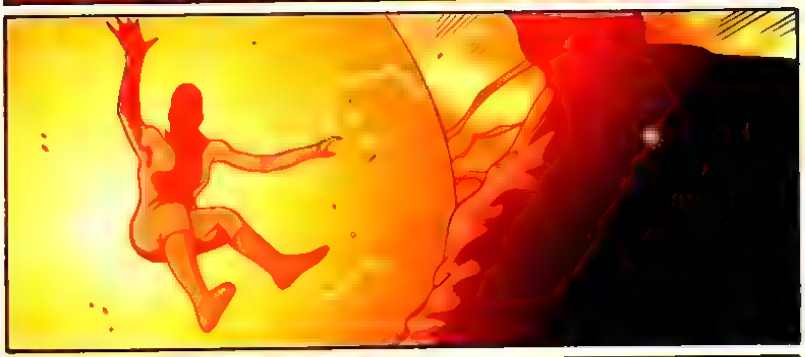
"See, in history, Sentinels are usually guardians of gates. So Falcone--with the help of both Tryp and Doom--developed a gateway.

"And now they were opening that gateway...a gateway designed to draw in the exact type of Hadron particles attached to the mutants.



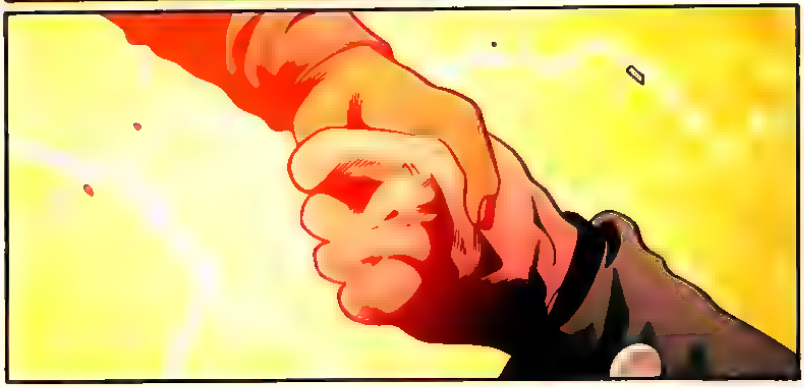
"Falcone figured he would go around the country, open the gateway, and mutants would just be yanked in, leaving humans unharmed.

"Atlantic City was the perfect test case. The most troublesome of the mutants hauled away in one shot...



"To tumble around between dimensions. And maybe they'd wind up somewhere, maybe not.

"Either way, Falcone would be rid of them.

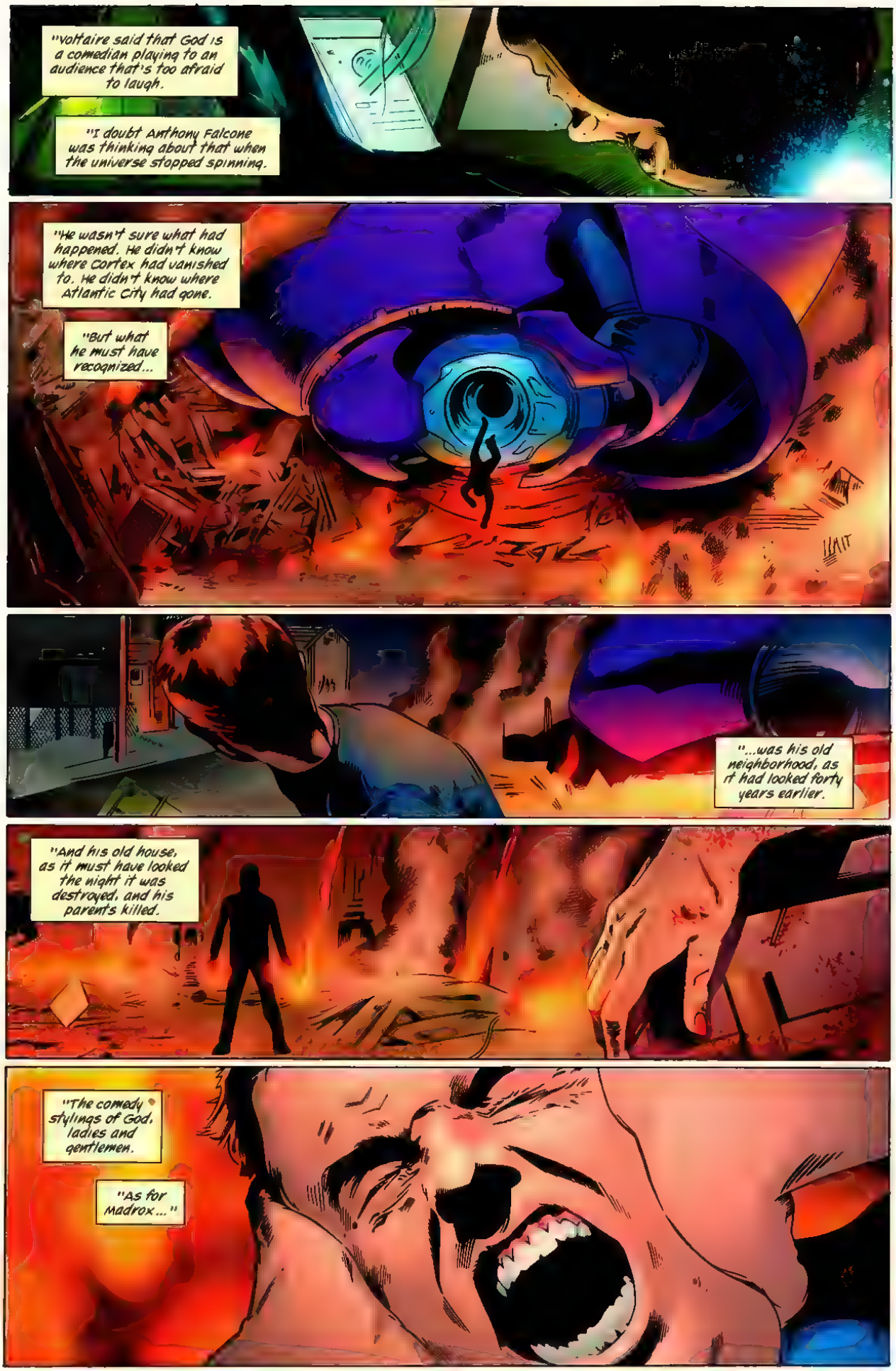


"But mutants, see...

"...we can be pretty darned stubborn."
YOU'RE IN SOME RATHER DIRE STRAITS THERE, MADROX.
BUT WORRY NOT. I ALREADY SAID I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU.
I'LL JUST BLOW APART YOUR ANCHOR.
ENJOY YOUR LIVING HELL, MADROX.
WE WON'T MEET AGAIN.
YOU GOT THAT RIGHT.

"Trevor Fitzroy was sort of like a vampire, except he didn't drain people's blood. Instead he took their life energy.
"And he did it before they even knew what hit them.
OOOOOOO TASTY
"Of all the mutants there, Fitzroy was the only one Cortex was vulnerable to.
"That's why he had killed him so quickly.
"Too bad for Cortex...
"...killing him hadn't stuck."
RUBY! NOW!

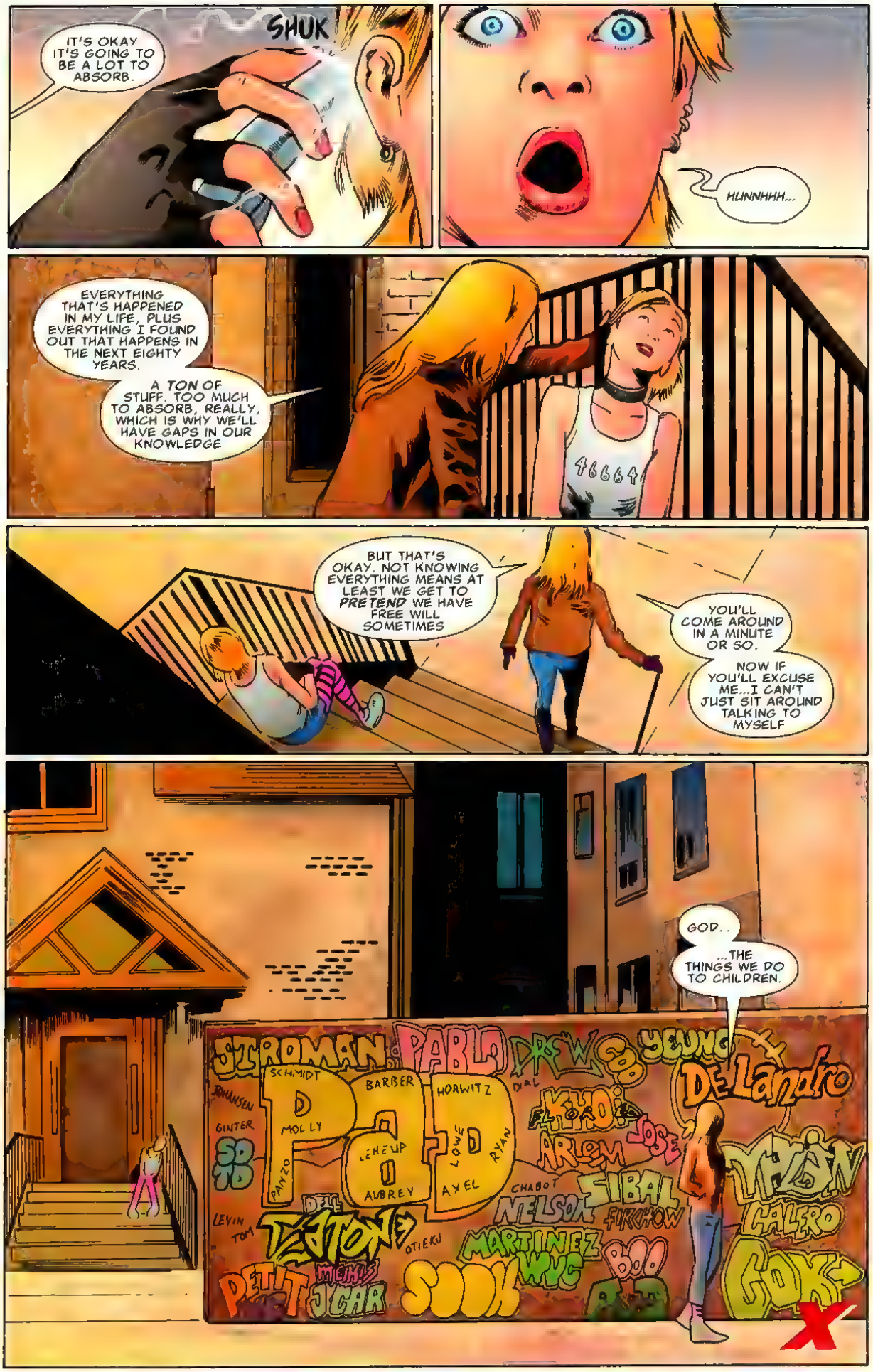
"It had taken Ruby a couple of minutes to get into position under the Boardwalk, where she had minimal protection. She guessed at her target's positioning.
"Luckily, she guessed right. It was enough to distract Falcone for just a moment. To stagger him. But most importantly...
"...to distract him."
YOU WANT A VORTEX? YOU GOT A VORTEX!
I DUNNO WHERE IT'LL TAKE YOU, BUT I HOPE YOU ROT THERE!
"Out of control, Falcone was dragged upward. And Ruby made darned sure...
"...that he would have company.


"Voltaire said that God is a comedian playing to an audience that's too afraid to laugh.
"I doubt Anthony Falcone was thinking about that when the universe stopped spinning.
"He wasn't sure what had happened. He didn't know where Cortex had vanished to. He didn't know where Atlantic City had gone.
"But what he must have recognized...
"...was his old neighborhood, as it had looked forty years earlier.
"And his old house, as it must have looked the night it was destroyed, and his parents killed.
"The comedy stylings of God, ladies and gentlemen.
"As for Madrox..."

LAYLA? ARE..
ARE YOU OKAY?
IS IT TRUE WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT FITZROY? DID.. DID YOU REALLY--?
"KNOWING STUFF" WAS NEVER MY POWER, JAMIE.
I CAN RETURN LIFE TO THE DEAD
I DID SMALL STUFF AT FIRST. BIGGER AS I GOT OLDER
THIS IS INCREDIBLE! YOU CAN--
NO
BUT BANSHEE! YOU COULD BRING HIM BACK! THERESA WOULD--
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! WITH A BUG OR A SEAL...NO ONE NOTICES! BUT WITH A PERSON... MY GOD, WITH FITZROY...
NOTICES WHAT?
THEY DON'T HAVE SOULS, JAMIE.
FITZROY WILL HAVE NO SOUL, NO CONSCIENCE NO MORALITY.
I SHOULD HAVE REFUSED. I COULD HAVE BUT I DIDN'T, BECAUSE MY JOB IS TO KEEP REALITY ON TRACK
I--
NOW WHAT--?

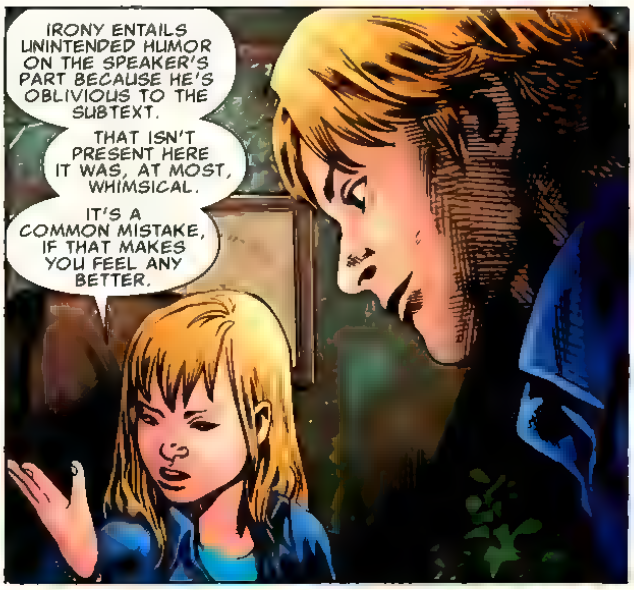
"Apparently Doom had left his time device rigged for one final trip.
"I know why, of course. And so will you soon enough. And Jamie will find out too in a couple years.
"All Jamie knew at the moment was that one second we were in the future, and then...
"...Madrox was rematerializing back in X-Factor headquarters.
"And I was nowhere to be seen."

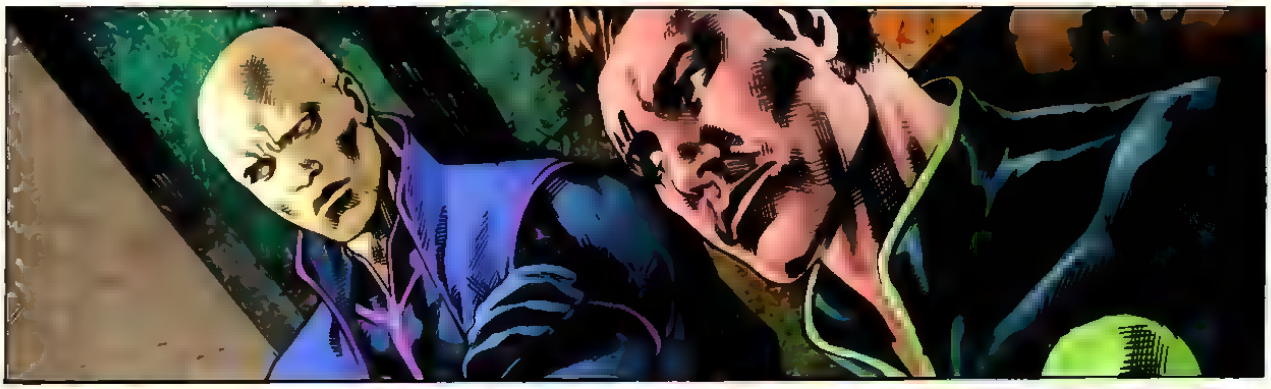
ST JOAN'S
ORPHANAGE
BUT WHERE WERE YOU? WHERE DID YOU GO?
WHY?
HERE. I WOUND UP HERE AND NOW
BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE I NEEDED TO BE.
I'M STILL NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND
DOUGLAS ADAMS
TIME IS AN ILLUSION LUNCHTIME DOUBLY SO
VERY GOOD
46664
REALITY IS ALSO AN ILLUSION, AND SO IS FREE WILL, AS I SAID.
SOMETIMES WE ARE WHO WE ARE. BUT MOST OF THE TIME, WE'RE WHO OTHERS NEED US TO BE.
I NEED YOU TO BE THAT PERSON.
OKAY. LOOK...LET'S SAY I BELIEVE YOU. THAT YOU'RE ME.
THAT ALL THESE THINGS HAPPENED TO...US.
THAT I JOIN A MUTANT TEAM, GET A FASHION FAUX PAS ETCHED ON MY FACE. THE THING IS...
WHAT NOW?
RIGHT. WHAT NOW?
YOU'RE...GOING TO TAKE MY TEMPERATURE?
NO. I WANT YOU TO BRUSH YOUR HAIR BACK


IT'S OKAY IT'S GOING TO BE A LOT TO ABSORB.
SHUK
HUNNHHH...
EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED IN MY LIFE, PLUS EVERYTHING I FOUND OUT THAT HAPPENS IN THE NEXT EIGHTY YEARS.
A TON OF STUFF. TOO MUCH TO ABSORB, REALLY, WHICH IS WHY WE'LL HAVE GAPS IN OUR KNOWLEDGE
BUT THAT'S OKAY. NOT KNOWING EVERYTHING MEANS AT LEAST WE GET TO PRETEND WE HAVE FREE WILL SOMETIMES
YOU'LL COME AROUND IN A MINUTE OR SO.
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...I CAN'T JUST SIT AROUND TALKING TO MYSELF
GOD..
...THE THINGS WE DO TO CHILDREN.

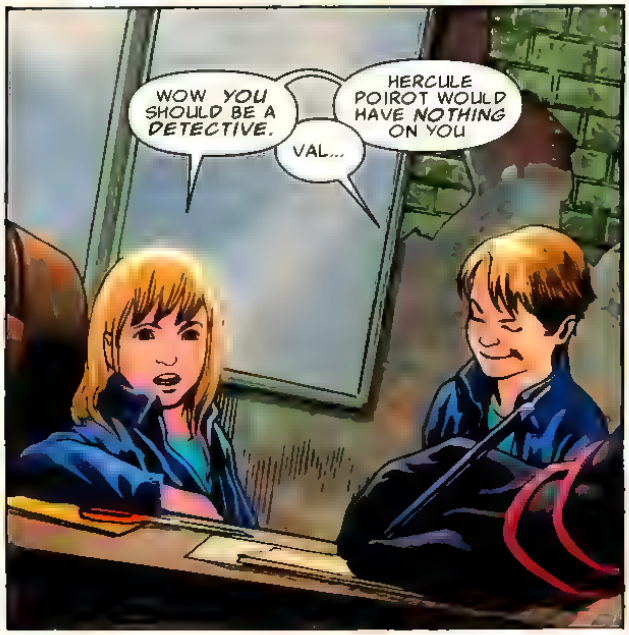
THE INVISIBLE WOMAN HAS
VANISHED!

WOW I'M WRITING THAT DOWN
WRITING WHAT--?
WHAT HE JUST SAID IT'S A GREAT TITLE FOR, I DUNNO, SOMETHING. I LOVE THE IRONY
IT'S NOT IRONY

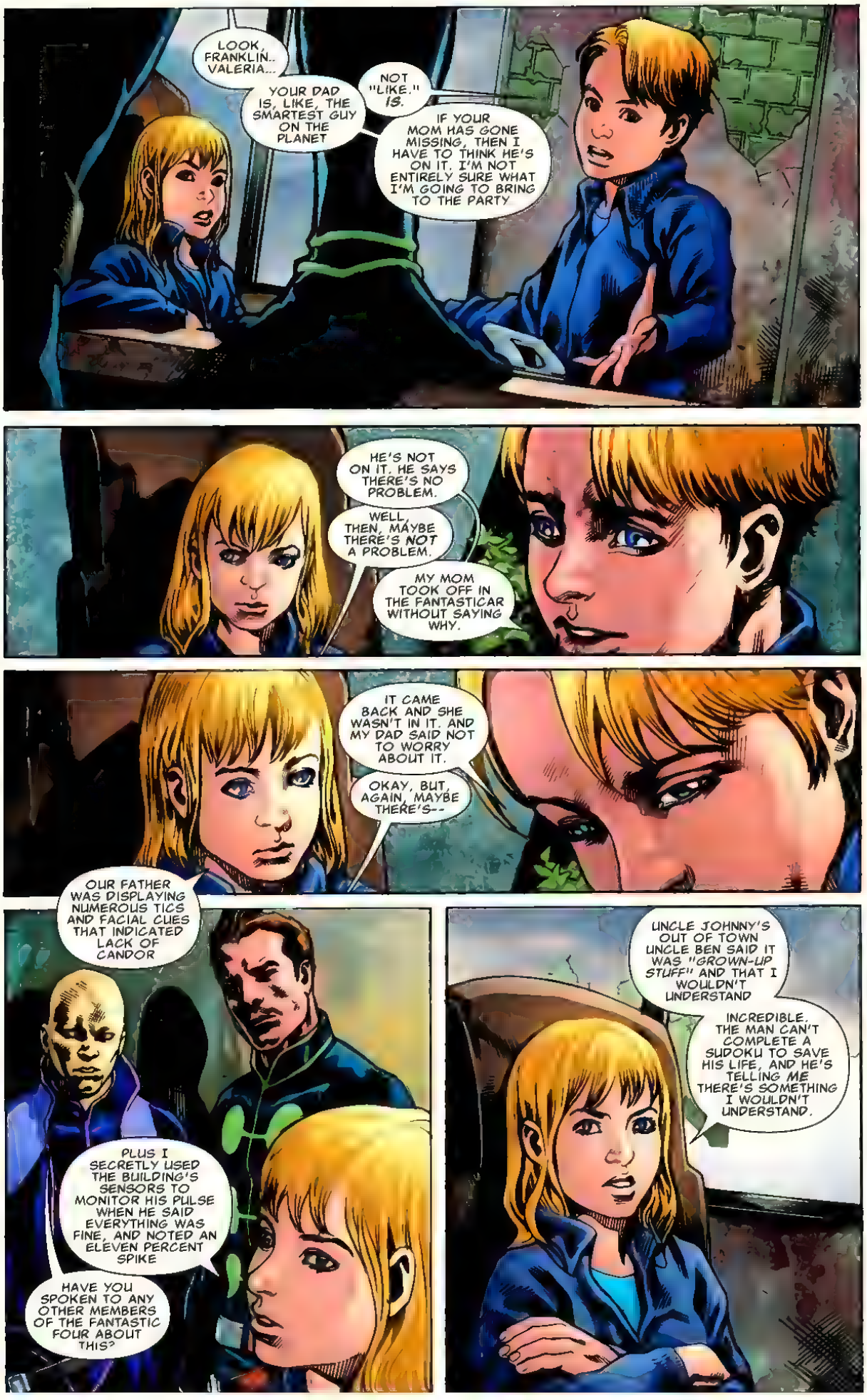

IRONY ENTAILS UNINTENDED HUMOR ON THE SPEAKER'S PART BECAUSE HE'S OBLIVIOUS TO THE SUBTEXT.
THAT ISN'T PRESENT HERE IT WAS, AT MOST, WHIMSICAL.
IT'S A COMMON MISTAKE, IF THAT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER.



WHO ARE YOU AGAIN?
VALERIA RICHARDS.
LET ME GUESS. YOUR FATHER'S REED RICHARDS


WOW YOU SHOULD BE A DETECTIVE.
HERCULE POIROT WOULD HAVE NOTHING ON YOU
VAL...

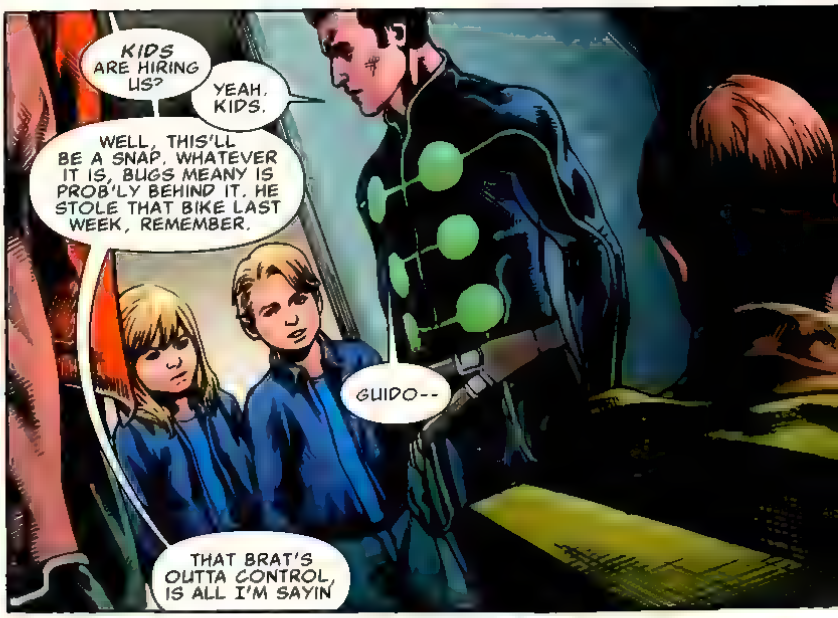
WE'RE LIKE THE GUY FROM "PINK PANTHER"?
SEE, NOW, THAT'S IRONY
DARWIN, DON'T HELP, OKAY?


LOOK, FRANKLIN.. VALERIA...
YOUR DAD IS, LIKE, THE SMARTEST GUY ON THE PLANET
NOT "LIKE." IS.
IF YOUR MOM HAS GONE MISSING, THEN I HAVE TO THINK HE'S ON IT. I'M NOT ENTIRELY SURE WHAT I'M GOING TO BRING TO THE PARTY.
HE'S NOT ON IT. HE SAYS THERE'S NO PROBLEM.
WELL, THEN, MAYBE THERE'S NOT A PROBLEM.
MY MOM TOOK OFF IN THE FANTASTICAR WITHOUT SAYING WHY.
IT CAME BACK AND SHE WASN'T IN IT. AND MY DAD SAID NOT TO WORRY ABOUT IT.
OKAY, BUT, AGAIN, MAYBE THERE'S--
OUR FATHER WAS DISPLAYING NUMEROUS TICS AND FACIAL CUES THAT INDICATED LACK OF CANDOR
PLUS I SECRETLY USED THE BUILDING'S SENSORS TO MONITOR HIS PULSE WHEN HE SAID EVERYTHING WAS FINE, AND NOTED AN ELEVEN PERCENT SPIKE
HAVE YOU SPOKEN TO ANY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FANTASTIC FOUR ABOUT THIS?
UNCLE JOHNNY'S OUT OF TOWN UNCLE BEN SAID IT WAS "GROWN-UP STUFF" AND THAT I WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND
INCREDIBLE. THE MAN CAN'T COMPLETE A SUDOKU TO SAVE HIS LIFE, AND HE'S TELLING ME THERE'S SOMETHING I WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.

OKAY, KIDS, SIT TIGHT. I WANT TO CONFER WITH MY ASSOCIATE
SURE
AS YOU WISH
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I THINK THE LITTLE GIRL'S CREEPING ME OUT
THAT'S ONLY 'CAUSE LAYLA WAS BEFORE YOUR TIME SO, PUTTING HER ASIDE
ACTUALLY, FOR ME, IT'S ALL ABOUT HER
MEANING--?
MEANING HOWEVER SMART HER DAD IS, SHE OBVIOUSLY AIN'T NO SLOUCH HERSELF. WHICH TELLS ME THAT IF SHE SAYS THERE'S SMOKE...
...THERE'S FIRE? YUP, THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING, TOO
THINK THEY'RE GOING TO HELP?
YES. I CREEP OUT DARWIN, BUT THEY FEEL OUR CONCERNS MIGHT BE VALID
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
I USED MY PERIPHERAL VISION TO LIP-READ THEM
OKAY, NOW YOU'RE CREEPING ME OUT

ARE YOU NOT ENTERTAINED?!
SPEAKING FOR MYSELF, I AM.
ALTHOUGH HIS SWORDSMANSHIP IS PATHETIC I COULD DISEMBOWEL HIM IN FIVE SECONDS
YOU GET THAT HE'S AN ACTOR RIGHT?
NO EXCUSE. BUT HE DELIVERS THE DIALOGUE NICELY.
WHATTAYA WATCHIN'?
YEAH?
"GLADIATOR."
TELL ME, SHATTERSTAR DO YOU LIKE GLADIATOR MOVIES?
APPARENTLY SO
FIGURES
NOT FUNNY, GUIDO! NOT FUNNY!
I JUST MISSED SOMETHING HERE, DIDN'T I
OKAY, GUYS! SADDLE UP! WE'VE GOT A CASE!
'BOUT TIME.

HUH?


KIDS ARE HIRING US?
YEAH. KIDS.
WELL, THIS'LL BE A SNAP. WHATEVER IT IS, BUGS MEANY IS PROB'LY BEHIND IT. HE STOLE THAT BIKE LAST WEEK, REMEMBER.
GUIDO--
THAT BRAT'S OUTTA CONTROL, IS ALL I'M SAYIN

OUR MOM, THE INVISIBLE WOMAN, HAS VANISHED.

DO YOU THINK THAT'S SOMETHING WORTH JOKING ABOUT?
WELL? DO YOU?
UH..NO SORRY
GOOD

ALTHOUGH, Y'KNOW, THE INVISIBLE WOMAN VANISHING IS KIND OF IRON--

I SWEAR TO GOD, GUIDO, DON'T GO THERE

BY THE WAY, WE DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY TO PAY YOU--
CAN YOUR SISTER GIVE ME STOCK TIPS?
ABSOLUTELY.
THEN LET'S FIND YOUR MOM.

HARD TO BELIEVE WE'RE BACK IN NEW YORK
THAT WE'RE OPERATING OUT OF AN ABANDONED FUNERAL HOME I MANAGED TO BUY ON THE CHEAP
WHEN I TOLD THE CREW GUIDO AND I WERE GOING TO RESTART X-FACTOR INVESTIGATIONS IN NEW YORK SO THAT TERRY COULD HAVE DETROIT ALL TO HERSELF...
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT MOST OF THEM WOULD SHOW UP ON MY DOORSTEP A MONTH LATER BECAUSE TERRY DECIDED TO SHUT DOWN THE OFFICE
HEY MADROX. IS IT JUST ME, OR DOES THE GIRL REMIND YOU OF LAY--?
IT'S NOT JUST YOU
SOPHIE
Sydney
TO BE CONTINUED IN X-FACTOR #200 ON SALE IN DECEMBER...

X-PERT WITNESSES

Hi Guys!
Thanks to everyone for joining us for the fiftieth issue of X-Factor. A ton of work went into the making of this series so let's hear it for all the members of the creative teams and editorial staff who made it all happen. I think we managed to do a pretty good job if I may say so myself. But this book wouldn't be a success were it not for you, the loyal readers. So thank you all for your support and interest and for helping to make X-Factor one of the best books in the business.

We have a few letters here for Mr. David so I'll stop jabberin' and let him take it away...

I guess sometimes you don't know what you have 'til it's gone.
I am an X-Factor reader who never bothered to put it on my "pull" list at my local comic shop, and they usually sell out by Sunday.
I see Marvel has no X-Factor solicited for November, and the word is it is to be cancelled.
I am absolutely gutted about this, and feel that Marvel really has a cult classic on their hands, but is giving it the boot anyway. It's the only X-book I read. I hope those in charge will reconsider their stance on this.

R.I.P. X-Factor

Regards
Gareth

Y'know, Gareth, back in my fan days, none of us had access to solicits, and I have to say, that might not have been such a bad thing. Not only did we not have major plot points spoiled months in advance, but we saved ourselves some occasional needless worrying. Just think: If you hadn't read the solicits, you would have asked your retailer in November why X-Factor was MIA and he would've said, "Don't sweat it! Marvel decided to renumber everyone's favorite mutant detective agency to #200 and make it double-sized! It'll be out next month!" And you could've said, "Whoa! Outstanding! Slap that puppy on my pull list!" Now it's too late to do anything about your being scared over cancellation, but the pull list is still available so your retailer can know to have a copy set aside for you. In fact, we'd recommend that to everyone reading these pages because we're hearing about a lot of stores selling out, and pull lists are the best way to send a message to your retailers that popularity is on the upswing and they should be ready to meet the demand!

Hey. First off, I love X-Factor. I saw that you guys are going to renumber and move the team back to New York, so that X-Factor is the "go to" detective agency in the Marvel U. I was thinking that it would be cool if Jessica Jones was added to the cast. I loved her in Alias and it would go along with the stuff I read about you wanting to tie into the larger Marvel collective. Plus it wouldn't hurt to have another licensed PI on the staff. I am sure I'm not the first to think of this. Just a thought.

D in KC

I've actually been toying with a few people we could bring in, D in KC, but let's face it: The cast is pretty big right now. We have enough people who aren't getting sufficient face time, so I'm not sure adding even more cast members is the way to go. Which isn't to say that a guest shot by Jessica (or any of the other Marvel gumshoes running around) is off the table. After all, one of the classic tropes in noir is to have two detectives working at cross purposes to each other.

Hey X-Factor dupes, er, dudes...

I have a question that's been buggin' me for a while and it's about the issue in which Madrox holds Theresa's newborn baby and absorbs him, 'cause it turned out he actually was the son of a dupe, not of Madrox prime. Yet in the issue that deals with his search for the "priest" dupe, he touches his son and nothing happens, so I'm confused by this.

That's my two cents. Thanks a lot and keep up the great work.

Giovanny
Bogota, Colombia

I'm not sure how far behind you are in your reading, Giovanny, but in issue #40—the very next issue after the absorption story—we revealed that John Maddox was not, in fact, the biological father of his son. We knew that that was going to raise a red flag for a number of alert readers and so answered it as quickly as possible.

Dear X-Factor Folks,

First let me start by saying excellent job on presenting us with a well-developed team of characters that we genuinely care about.
Not since X-Force (vol.1) have I enjoyed getting to know an exciting and dynamic group of characters. It's also nice to see several of my former "X-Forcer" favorites each month in the pages of X-Factor!
I'd like to take this time to write about my favorite team member; SIRYN.
I was thrilled to see her make a grand return from the great Marvel Universe of M.I.A. characters! She seemed to all but disappear after having her vocal cords severed by Feral back in X-Force #90. It's nice to see her back in the driver's seat with this new team and taking a deserved place of power.
I'd like to see Terry and former X-Force teammate Rictor expand on their past friendship. (It seems as though each of them can use a solid friend these days.)
I'm anxious to see the direction you take SIRYN in the future with X-Factor. I'd love to see her grow and develop into a leader position on the team. With Jamie currently in and out of the present, Terry is a perfect choice for the "take charge" person needed to run the show!
I'm sure with all the recent changes in her personal life, from the death of her father, Banshee, to the loss of her baby, she has a full plate at the moment, but as she works through these issues, I'm sure it will only make her an even stronger asset to X-Factor.
Also, any chance of seeing a visiting Deadpool or Warpath to spark up some romantic rivalry between her former beaus and Jamie? There has to be some drama waiting to happen there!
Thanks for taking the time to hear a dedicated reader's thoughts.
Until I get to hear that beautiful screaming voice of SIRYN again, keep up the awesome work!

David Bretz
Orlando, FL

I feel confident in saying that Deadpool will very likely pop up at the most unexpected time and place. As for Terry, I absolutely agree that she has tremendous leadership potential and indeed does the heavy lifting for the group when Madrox is exiled from Detroit. Once he rejoins the team, though, we're going to wind up seeing whether or not X-Factor is big enough for the both of them and, if not, what the fallout is going to be and what the shape of the team will develop into. Stick with us, David: I promise you won't be disappointed!

That's it for this month! We'll see you back here in December when X-Factor gets new cases, new digs and new costumes in the giant-sized issue #200! 'Til then keep sending us your letters and we'll keep making comics!

-- Jody LeHeup
10/01/09

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X-FACTOR #200 COMING IN DECEMBER

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Minutemen
Danger Powers